

June 20, 2019

1792 SILVER AND NON-SILVER CENTER CENTS:

**FURTHER STUDIES OF THE SILVER PLUG CONTAINED IN THE
MORRIS SO-CALLED SILVER CENTER CENT**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	3
 SECTION 1: PHOTO COMPARISON STUDIES	 4
Exhibit 1: Obverse Silver Center Plug Position Study	5
Exhibit 2: Reverse Silver Center Plug Position Study	6
Exhibit 3: Obverse Hair Curl Study	7
Exhibit 4: Enlarged Obverse Hair Curl Comparison	8
Exhibit 5: Reverse Lettering Comparison	9
Exhibit 6: Reverse Silver Plug Study	10
 SECTION 2: HISTORICAL REFERENCES	 12
Exhibit 1: Excerpts from "Auction Appearances and Pedigree Records of the 1792 Silver Center Cent" by P. Scott Rubin	13
Exhibit 2: Rubin Article Observations	14
Exhibit 3: Further Study of 1792 Silver Center Cent Catalog References	15
Exhibit 4: April 1905, S. H. & H. Chapman Catalog, Morris Collection, Lot 361	17
Exhibit 5: January 1890, New York Coin & Stamp, Davis Collection, Lot 1008a.	18
Exhibit 6: September 1974, Pine Tree Rare Coin, G.E.N.A. Sale, Lot 1272a	19
Exhibit 7: 1974 Morris Coin Provenance Misattribution	22
Exhibit 8: 1974 Morris Coin Provenance Correction	24
Exhibit 9: Judd-1 Trial Fabrication Theory Refuted	25
 SECTION 3: FABRICATED SILVER CENTER INDIAN HEAD CENTS	 26
Introduction	27
Exhibit 1: First Silver Center Indian Head Cent Trial Fabrications—Obverse and Reverse	28
Exhibit 2: Process Stage Comparison—Obverse and Reverse	29
Exhibit 3: Finished Obverse/Reverse vs. Non-Holed Cent	30
Exhibit 4: Enlarged Finished Fabrication	31
Exhibit 5: Multiple Fabricated Silver Center Indian Head Cents	32
 SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS	 34
 ADDENDA	 37
Addendum 1: June 1890, NY Coin & Stamp, Parmelee Auction, Lot 5, Plate 1	38
Addendum 2: December 1895, S.H. & H. Chapman, Winsor Collection, Lot 291, Plate II	39
Addendum 3: Ken Hopple Fabricating a Silver Center Indian Head Cent	41
Addendum 4: 1792 Judd-1 Without Silver Plug— Question and Answer	48
Addendum 5: Analysis of the Economics of Fabricating a Retooled Silver Center Cent	49

INTRODUCTION

This presentation expands upon our findings in "1792 Silver and Non-Silver Center Cents: A Study," as published in **The Newman Numismatic Portal**, November 15, 2017, and in **The E-Sylum**, November 19, 2017. The research team of Robert Rodriguez, Tony Lopez, Stuart Levine, and Maureen Levine concluded that the Morris 1792 Silver Center Cent was a genuine 1792 Judd-2 pattern cent; however, the plug is a fabrication that was drilled, inserted, and tooled **AFTER** the coin was produced and emitted by the United States Mint at Philadelphia. Our research findings affirm the conclusion, as published in the 2017 volume, **1792: Birth of a Nation's Coinage**, and the conclusions of S. H. & H. Chapman in their April 1905 *Catalog of the Charles Morris Collection of Coins and Medals*.

Our new exhibits show that the Morris fabricated Silver Center Cent is an outlier from all Judd-1 examples, as well as the Judd-1a. Additionally, we provide comparisons which demonstrate the Morris specimen's silver plug design does not match the die characteristics of all known original struck examples. Finally, we have gained new insights into the process of how the Morris coin was fraudulently transformed from a genuine Judd-2.

From November 7, 2017, through January 9, 2019, none of the team members owned or had an economic partnership interest in any 1792 Silver Center Cent. Throughout this entire research process, Robert Rodriguez placed himself on personal restriction from acquiring one until our research had been conveyed to PCGS and CAC. With the addition of Section 2, Exhibit 9, Heritage Auctions accepted our research conclusion and included the following statement in its 2019 Heritage Auction FUN catalog description of the Weinberg Specimen, Lot 4308: "The former Charles Morris and California specimens have been delisted, since recent research indicates their silver plugs are not original." As a result of this public acknowledgement, Mr. Rodriguez withdrew his personal restriction and acquired the Weinberg Specimen on January 10, 2019.

We have undertaken this project in the spirit of seeking the truth. Our goal is to improve the perception of, and confidence in, the American numismatic industry. If third party grading firms are willing to change a previously held assessment, based upon new research study findings, it can only benefit the collecting community.

SECTION 1

PHOTO COMPARISON STUDIES

EXHIBIT 1

Obverse Silver Center Plug Position Study



Garrett



Norweb



Newman



Weinberg



Bushnell/ Parmelee



Smithsonian



Kendall



Partrick



Judd



Mickley



Wilmott



Brand/Starr



Modesto Police



Morris



Judd - 1a



Judd - 2 (Weinberg)

Note the position of the silver plugs relative to the red reference lines placed at the bottoms of the earlobes. The tops of 13 of the 14 silver plugs shown in the plate either touch or are positioned slightly above the red line. The plug in the Morris example is far below the red reference line. It is drastically out of position compared to all of the other Silver Center Cents. (The Judd-1a and Judd-2 are shown for comparison purposes.) Please note that the Modesto police specimen contains an iron plug; this was inserted by unknown persons outside the Mint in place of the silver plug.

EXHIBIT 2

Reverse Silver Center Plug Position Study



Garrett



Norweb



Newman



Weinberg



Bushnell/ Parmelee



Smithsonian



Kendall



Patrick



Judd



Mickley



Wilmott



Brand/Starr



Modesto Police



Morris



Judd - 1a



Judd - 2 (Weinberg)

As on the obverse comparison on Exhibit 1, this reverse comparison shows the top of the Morris plug noticeably below the red reference line, which is placed at the baseline of the word "ONE." The tops of the plugs of all other examples either touch or are positioned slightly above this line. (The Brand/Starr and Modesto Police examples do not have a red line because the word "ONE" is not visible on either.)

EXHIBIT 3

Obverse Hair Curl Study



Morris



Newman



**Bushnell/
Parmelee**



Norweb



Garrett



Partrick

Judd-1 Transparent Overlay

35% Transparent Norweb over Morris example



**Morris Judd-1 with
hair detail emphasized**



**Transparent overlay
showing difference in
hair detail and size of
silver plugs**



**Norweb Judd-1
@ 35% transparency**

The design of the hair curl on the Morris example plug is different from that seen on all other examples. A single strand of hair in the shape of a simple arc appears on the Morris. All other examples have the innermost strand showing an indented arc.

Enlarged Obverse Hair Curl Comparison



MORRIS



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

NEWMAN

The comparison of the Morris and Newman examples shows clear differences in the treatment of Liberty's hair on the silver plugs. The Morris plug shows a single strand of hair in the shape of a simple arc. The Newman coin shows multiple strands, with the innermost showing an indented arc.

EXHIBIT 5

Reverse Lettering Comparison



Morris



Newman



The red arrows show the direction in which the base of the letter "E" in "CENT" is pointing. The "E" on the Morris example points downward. The "E" on all genuine examples, such as the Newman coin shown above, points upward.

Reverse Silver Plug Study



MORRIS— SILVER CENTER PLUG – ENGRAVED, NOT STRUCK

Note the tooling marks on the surface of the silver plug in between the letters "E" and "N" in "CENT."
Also note the crude engraving of the portions of the letters "E" and "N" which appear on the silver plug.
These irregular shapes do not match any of the other examples.

Reverse Silver Plug Study



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

NEWMAN—CENTER PLUG STRUCK BY ORIGINAL DIES

Here the plug is without tooling marks. Note that the shapes of the letters "E" and "N" in "CENT" match all other known examples with one exception: the Morris specimen.

SECTION 2

HISTORICAL REFERENCES

EXHIBIT 1

Excerpts from "Auction Appearances and Pedigrees of the 1792 Silver Center Cent" by P. Scott Rubin

"S.H. & H. Chapman's Apr. 19-20, 1905 sale of the Charles Morris Collection. The Silver Center Cent described in this catalog as lot 361 is again a coin of some question, at least in the Chapmans' minds. The coin is said to have a **'Silver Center inserted to give bullion value to this small size cent but the plug in this specimen has been inserted after the piece was struck and engraved with part impression'**. They go on to say another interesting thing about the no silver center cents, 'two or three proofs in copper without the silver center are known, and this is one of these with the silver center falsely inserted. Extremely Fine. Sharp Impression. Light Olive. Excessively Rare. See Plate.' And see plate I did. The plate of this coin is of interest later on." Item #16, COAC book pages 135-6. (Our bold highlighting.)

"Pine Tree Coin Auction Sales' Sept. 18-21, 1974 sale, held in conjunction with the Great Eastern Numismatic Association Convention. Lot 1272a is described as Extremely Fine-About Uncirculated and is plated. More information about pedigrees is printed in this catalog than in any previous source. Seven different specimens are noted. From the plate, I was able to see that this is the same coin that appeared in the 1905 Chapman sale of the Morris Collection. At that sale, the Chapmans made a big deal about the silver center (see listing above): no mention of its legitimacy is made in the current sale. ***Without proper examination, it would be impossible to tell if it is a real Silver Center Cent or a doctored No Silver Center Cent.*** This coin realized \$105,000." Item #33, COAC book page 139. (Our bold highlighting and italicizing.)

"The Morris-Eastern Collection-Mitkoff & Numismatic Ltd.-1974 GENA-Anton-Private Collection coin is Extremely Fine to About Uncirculated, well centered but weakly struck on the lower left of the obverse and the lower right on the reverse. There is a scratch above the 92 in the date and carbon spots in front of the bust and behind the hair below the right side of the N in SCIENCE. **The silver center is well below the ear and does not touch the jaw, it only covers one strand of hair. On the reverse the Silver Center covers only the right half of the E in CENT and left two thirds of the N, it does not come close to touching any other letters.**" Item #4, COAC book pages 144-5. (Our bold highlighting.)

Please click on the link to view *America's Copper Coinage, 1783-1857. Coinage of the America's conference, 1984*. The Rubin article is reproduced therein in its entirety.
<http://numismatics.org/digitallibrary/ark:/53695/nnan11280>

EXHIBIT 2

Rubin Article Observations

For his 1984 COAC article on the 1792 Silver Center Cent, Rubin searched the catalogs in his library from 1855 to 1984. The 38 entries he located ranged from the 1862 Woodward sale to the 1983 Doyle offering. His findings on the Morris specimen are most significant:

- 1. The Chapmans noted in 1905 that the plug in the Morris Silver Center Cent was falsely inserted after striking and was engraved rather than struck.
- 2. Rubin plate-matched lot 1272a, the Silver Center Cent appearing in the 1974 Pine Tree Coin Auction Sale, to the Morris example.
- 3. In Rubin's analysis of the Morris-Eastern Collection-Mitkoff & Numismatic Ltd. – 1974 G.E.N.A.-Anton-Private Collection specimen, he notes the silver plug's position as "well below" the ear.

EXHIBIT 3

Further Study of 1792 Silver Center Cent Catalog References

Building upon both P. Scott Rubin's 1984 study and the 2017 book, *1792: Birth of a Nation's Coinage*, by Pete Smith, Joel J. Orosz, and Leonard Augsburger, the team did further analysis to determine if any other catalogs other than the 1905 S.H. & H. Chapman Morris Sale mentioned any Silver Center Cent as having the plug inserted *after* striking. [Note: the Chapmans italicized the word "after" in the Morris Sale catalog, and that emphasis did not appear in the transcriptions included in the aforementioned 1984 or 2017 publications.]

Our research did not locate any other "after" references within the 38 catalogs from 1862 to 1983 cited by Rubin. However, we did find 11 catalog entries between 1882 and 1964 that mentioned the plug being inserted "before" striking. From that date range, in chronological order for each specific Silver Center Cent, we have listed every lot where the cataloger addresses the insertion of the plug. Any word in italics was formatted as such in the original catalog. The fact that the Chapmans stressed that the silver plug was inserted *before* striking in 1882 indicates knowledge of an insertion *after* striking, which they noted in 1905.

Bushnell Example

- June 1882 Bushnell Sale, S.H. & H. Chapman, lot 1766 – *before*
- May 1906 Harlan Smith Sale S.H. & H. Chapman, lot 1315 - before
- June 1912 George Earle Sale, H. Chapman, lot 2179 – before
- June 1947 Will W. Neil Sale, B. Max Mehl, lot 1794– before

Warner Example

- June 1884 Thomas Warner Sale, S.H. & H. Chapman, lot 3215 – *before*
- December 1895 Richard B. Winsor Sale, S.H. & H. Chapman, lot 291 – before

Davis Example

- January 1890 Robert Coulton Davis Sale, N.Y. Coin and Stamp, lot 1008a – before
- December 1921 Jenks Sale, H. Chapman, lot 5569 – before

Judd Example

- October 1907 Elder's Thirteenth Public Auction Sale, lot 1732 – "has the original silver plug" – original

Mickley Example

- February 1887 Ninety-Third Sale of Coins and Medals (cataloged as the Dohrmann coin), W. E. Woodward, lot 816: "The silver plug in the centre, by careful examination, showed a slight projection above the surface of the piece. It was intrusted to Mr. A. C. Geis of Pittsburgh, Pa., who tightened the plug, and, with consummate skill, retouched the legend on the silver." – plug tightened, and legend retouched
- March 1964 Public Auction, Kreisberg & Schulman, lot 1106 – before

Unknown Example

- January 1936 Public Auction Sale, Thomas Elder, lot 2968 – before

Brand/Starr Example

- October 1933 Great American Collection, J.C. Morgenthau & Co., lot 78 – before

Morris Example

- April 1905 Charles Morris Sale, S.H. & H. Chapman, lot 361: "Silver center inserted to give bullion value to this small size cent but the plug in this specimen has been inserted *after* the piece was struck and engraved with part of hair and letters that should have been from the impression. Two or three proofs in copper without the silver center are known, and this is one of these with the silver center falsely inserted." – *after*

In our study of the appearances of Silver Center Cents from Edward Cogan's March 1862 sale of the John K. Wiggin Collection (lot 747) to the present, this is the **only** instance of: an example noted with the plug inserted after striking; a reference to engraving (not retouching) hair and letters that did not originally exist because the center was not struck by the dies; the assertion that the silver center was falsely inserted; and the conclusion that the silver plug was falsely inserted into a Judd-2.

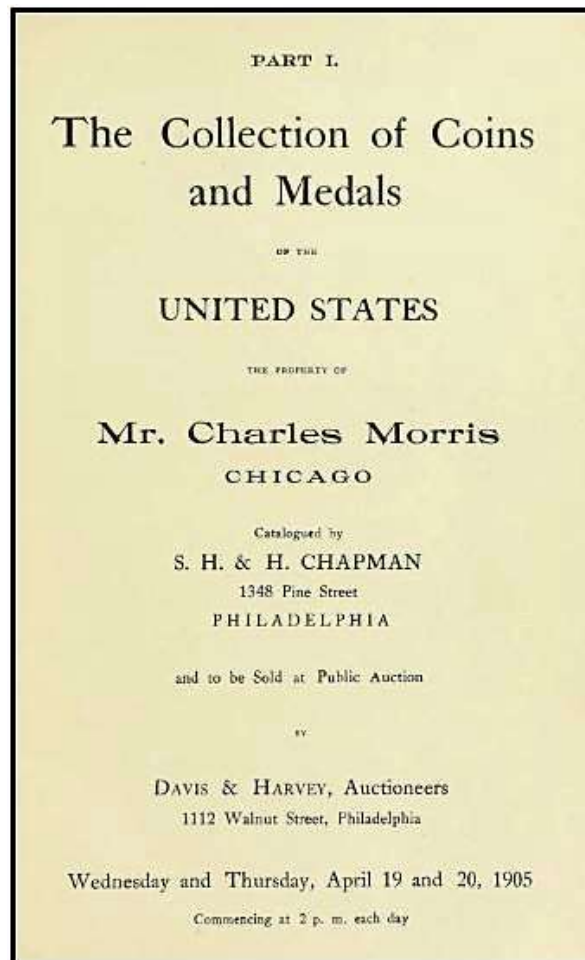
EXHIBIT 4

April 1905, S.H. & H. Chapman Catalog, Morris Collection, Lot 361



361 1792 Silver Centre Cent. Bust of Lib. r. LIBERTY PAR-
ENT OF SCIENCE & INDUST: 1792 beneath bust. R.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA $\frac{1}{10}$ in wreath ONE CENT.
Edge milled. Copper. Size $14\frac{1}{2}$. Silver center in-
serted to give bullion value to this small size cent
but the plug in this specimen has been inserted
after the piece was struck and engraved with part
of hair and letters that should have been from the
impression. Two or three proofs in copper without
the silver center are known, and this is one of these
with the silver center falsely inserted. Extremely
fine. Sharp impression. Light olive. Excessively
rare. See plate.

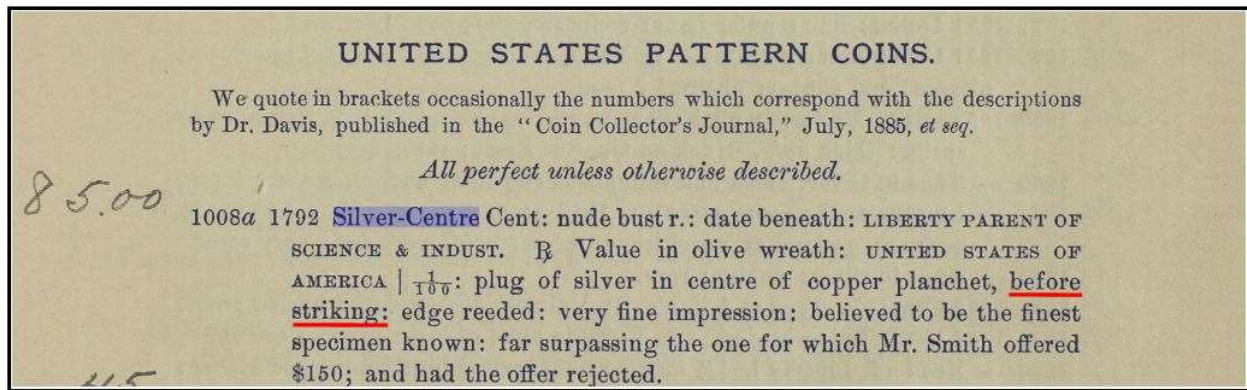
The Chapmans were trying to make a very clear point by italicizing "after" and stating that the plug was "falsely inserted."



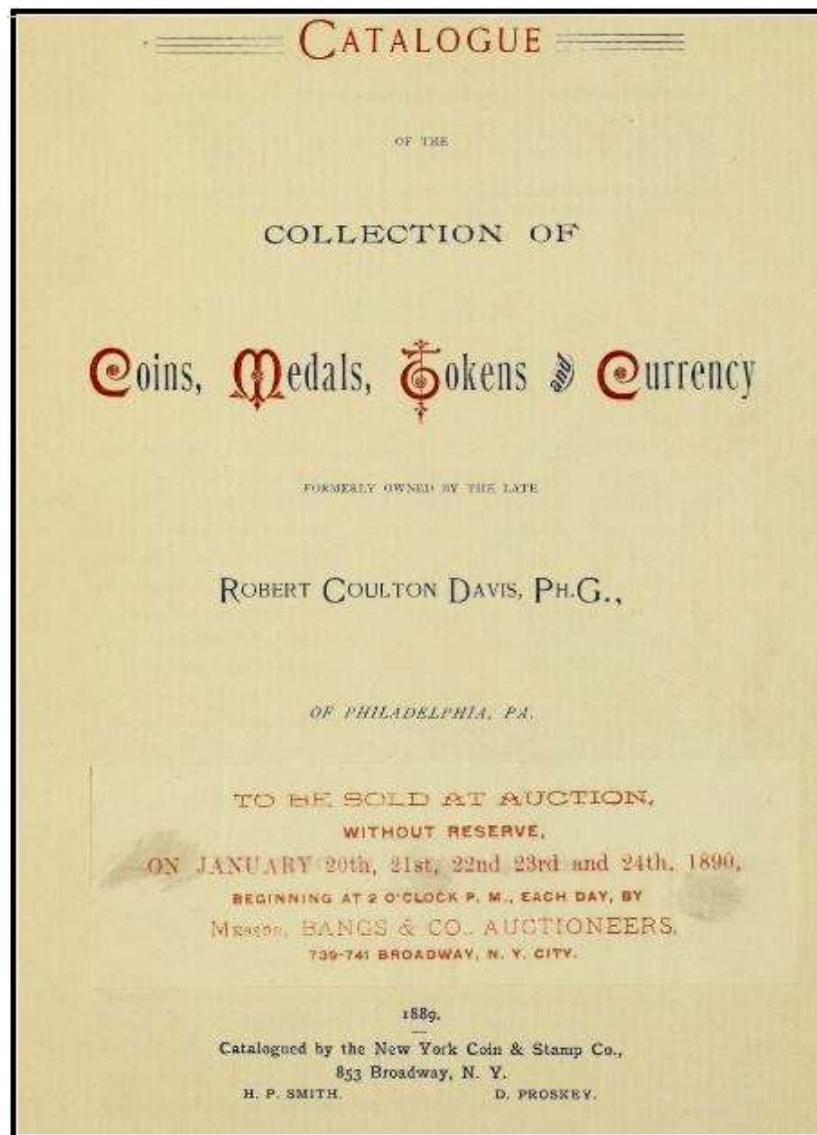
Please note: In their Bushnell catalog of 1882, the Chapmans described the "Silver Centre Cent" sold as lot 1766 as having a "silver plug inserted in centre of planchet *before* the piece was struck."

EXHIBIT 5

January 1890, New York Coin & Stamp Co., Davis Collection, Lot 1008a

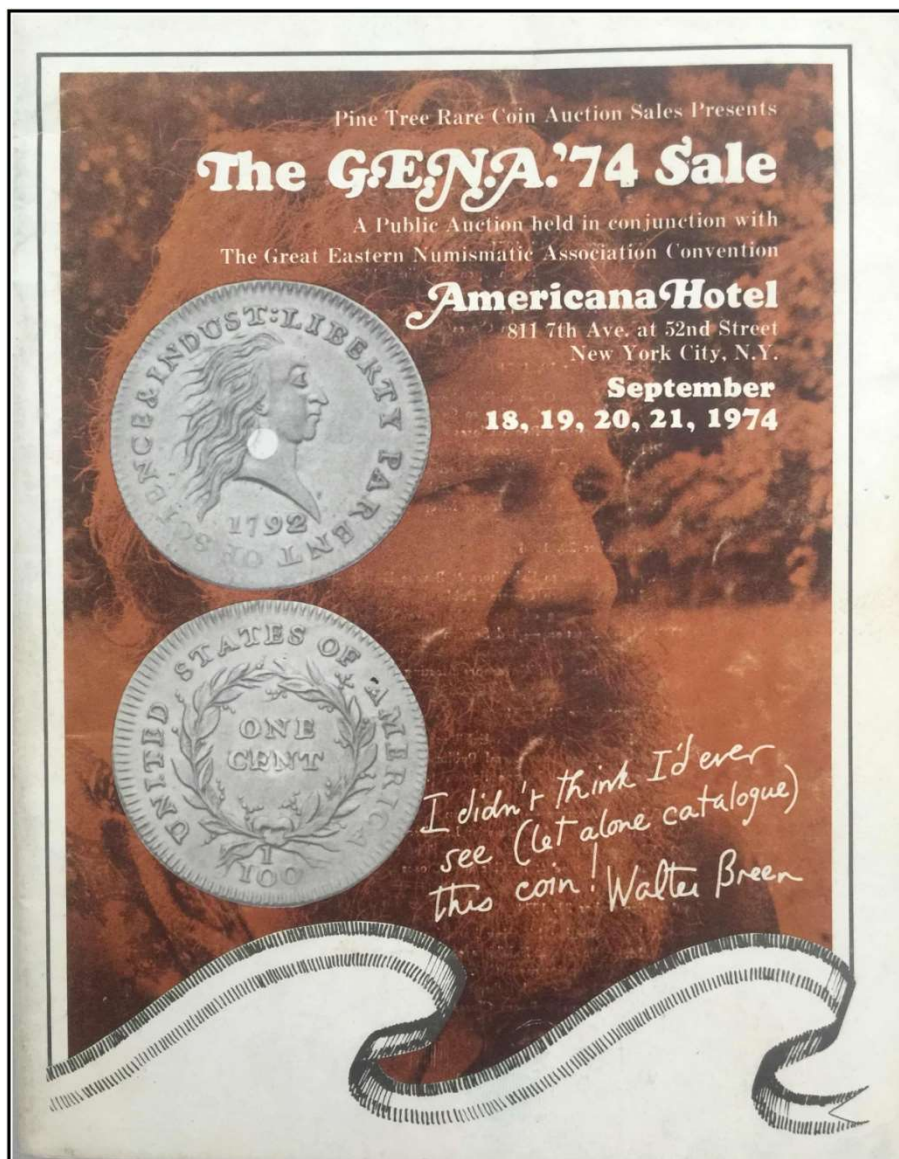


Like the Chapmans, New York Coin & Stamp Company also noted that the silver plug was inserted before striking.



September 1974, Pine Tree Rare Coin, G.E.N.A. Sale, Lot 1272a

Walter Breen cataloged the Morris so-called Silver Center Cent in the September 1974 Pine Tree Auctions G.E.N.A. sale, lot 1272a. This same coin was later sold in April 2012 by Heritage Auctions, and was most recently included in the November 2017 sale by Stacks-Bowers. Breen cataloged the coin in the 1974 G.E.N.A. sale as the example from the December 1921 Henry Chapman Jenks sale, previously sold in the Robert Coulton Davis Collection from the January 1890 New York Coin and Stamp sale. This information has been proven incorrect. Plate matching proves that the 1974 G.E.N.A. coin is actually the coin sold in S.H. and H. Chapman's sale of the Charles Morris collection in April 1905. This is shown in Exhibits 7 and 8.



September 1974, Pine Tree Rare Coin, G.E.N.A. Sale, Lot 1272a

1792 SILVER CENTERED CENT

117



MAGNIFICENT, HISTORIC, EXTREMELY RARE
PEDIGREED 1792 SILVER CENTER CENT

Second Finest in Collector's Hands

1272a 1792. SILVER CENTER CENT. Head of Liberty r., by Robert Birch, flowing hair, pointed bust, date below; LIBERTY PARENT OF SCIENCE & INDUSTRY; around. Rev. within wreath of the same general character as that on the 1793 wreath cents (ascribed to Adam Eckfeldt), 1/100 (large) below, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA around. Borders serrated with narrow spines; edge diagonally reeded. Copper, with silver plug in center. Crosby, fig. 109; Adams-Woodin 8; Taxay 1-A (plate 55:1); Judd 1. FIRST ISSUE EVER STRUCK IN THE PHILADELPHIA MINT, according to an experimental plan devised by Henry Voight, one of the "few pieces of copper coins" struck by him on December 17, 1792 (the dime and half dime had been struck outside for technical and legal reasons). BETWEEN EX. FINE AND ABOUT UNC. IN SHARPNESS, NATURAL REDDISH BROWN COLOR, FAINT HINTS OF LUSTRE AROUND LETTERS; shallow nick above 2 and space left, not disturbing color; no other handling marks worth mention. SECOND FINEST IN COLLECTOR'S HANDS, exceeded slightly by the Gschwend-Norweb coin and by the Ellsworth-Garrett coin impounded in Johns Hopkins University. OF THE UTMOST HISTORIC IMPORTANCE, as attested by the Jefferson letter quoted below; THE FIRST U. S. PATTERN CENT, devised as a potential alternative to the 264-grain cent authorized by the Mint Act of April 2, 1792, but already felt as impossibly bulky—a wholly original attempt to impart full bullion value to a copper coin. EXTREMELY RARE, ONE OF ONLY SEVEN AUTHENTICATED EXAMPLES (others have been seen but are either justly doubted or have been condemned as cast copies), one of the seven impounded in a university museum, a second destined for similar impoundment. THIS GLORIOUS OLD RARITY HAS BEEN LONG ACKNOWLEDGED AS THE MOST DESIRABLE AND THE MOST HIGHLY COVETED OF ALL PATERN CENTS. Ex Robert Coulton Davis coll., lot 1008a (1890), as "finest known," later Jenks, lot 5569 (1921), Waldo Newcomer, F. C. C. Boyd, and various dealer intermediaries. Earlier, believed ex A. Dohrmann coll., lot 437 and Hon. Heman Ely coll., lot 444 (both in Woodward auctions, respectively March 1882 and January 1884), though the plates are not of good



enough quality for certainty. FIRST TO BE AUCTIONED SINCE DECEMBER 1958, ONLY THE SECOND SINCE 1933.

Proof that this is in fact the first of the United States pattern cents is in Thomas Jefferson's letter to George Washington, Dec. 18, 1792, preserved in the National Archives, which we quote:

"Th: Jefferson has the honor to send the President two cents made on Voigt's plan by putting a silver plug worth $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cent into a copper worth $\frac{1}{4}$ cent."

"Mr. Rittenhouse is about to make a few by mixing the same plug by fusion with the same quantity of copper. He will then make of copper alone of the same size, and lastly he will make the real cent as ordered by Congress, 4 times as big. Specimens of these several ways of making the cent may now be delivered to the Committee of Congress now having the subject before them."

This letter speaks for itself. We append a pedigreed list of the specimens known to be authentic, based on researches by John J. Ford and Walter Breen, in approximate descending order of condition.

1. John Hopkins University, ex John Work Garrett bequest, ex Col. James W. Ellsworth (1923) via Wayte Raymond, earlier provenance unknown but believed to be Virgil Brand. Unc., golden brown, small nick at border over r. edge of first E of SCIENCE, others above 79 and below E of CENT.
2. Mrs. R. Henry Norweb, ex Peter Gschwend coll. (Elder, 1908), lot 116, Robert C. W. Brock, University of Pennsylvania, Philip H. Ward, New Netherlands ca. 1957. Unc., some prooflike surface, dark brown.
3. The present example, ex R. Coulton Davis, John Story Jenks, Newcomer, Boyd, A. Kosoff, Sol Kaplan, and other dealers; believed earlier ex Dohrmann and Ely colls. EF to AU, reddish brown.
4. Long Island private collection, ex B. Gimelson, believed ex Warner Lot 3215 (Chapman, 1884). Ex Fine, tiny rim nick just left of I in INDUSTRY; rev. nick joins N's in ONE CENT.
5. Eric P. Newman, apparently ex Edward Cogan, April 1863 sale, lot 1075, Bushnell Lot 1776 (then owned by Lorin G. Parmelee), Harlan P. Smith (1906 auction of his personal coll.), lot 1315, Earle Lot 2179 (1912), V. Brand, B. G. Johnson. Ex. Fine.
6. Last owner of record C. Romano, ex Parmelee 5 (1890), H. P. Smith privately, Carl Würzbach, Vir-

EXHIBIT 6 – CONTINUED

September 1974, Pine Tree Rare Coin, G.E.N.A. Sale, Lot 1272a

1792 SILVER CENTERED CENT/U. S. DIMES

gil Brand, Mrs. R. Henry Norweb by trade to New Netherlands ca. 1957, Elliot Landau, New Netherlands 52nd Sale, lot 104, Dec. 13, 1958, where bought by Romano for a then record \$2,300 after feverish floor action. Earlier, believed to be J. J. Mickley coll. (1867), lot 2135, via Col. Mendes I. Cohen sale, 1875, lot 380. Ex. Fine, scratched. Pictured in the Parmelee catalogue, the ANS 1914 Exhibition, the Standard Catalogue of U. S. Coins (18 editions through 1957), and the Guidebook.

7. Unknown private collection, ex George F. Seavey before 1863, lot 84 2in the descriptive catalogue of the Seavey Collection (which had been privately acquired by L. G. Parmelee), George Woodside coll. (1892), lot 1, Elder sale of Oct. 1907, Virgil Brand estate, J. C. Morgenthau (Wayte Raymond and J. G., MacAllister, cataloguers) 311th sale Oct. 18, 1933, lot 78. Very Good, well worn.

That in the Benjamin Haines sale of Jan. 1863, lot 780, is not identified with certainty, but may well be any of the first few. No other early auction records are known to us despite a search through over 800, possibly nearer to 1,000, catalogues since 1855.

THE NATIONAL COIN WEEK SLOGAN "HISTORY IN YOUR HANDS" PROBABLY COULD NOT BE BETTER APPLIED THAN TO THE FORTUNATE PURCHASER OF THIS CLASSIC EARLY AMERICAN PRIZE. THE PINNACLE OF THIS OR ANY OTHER AUCTION; FAMOUS EXAMPLE OF A RARITY ILLUSTRIOUS FOR OVER A CENTURY, NEVER RESTRUCK, NEVER CONTROVERSIAL IN STATUS (UNLIKE MOST OF THE OTHER SIX-FIGURE COINS OF TODAY), AND DESERVING OF MORE SUPERLATIVES THAN WE CAN BRING OURSELVES TO LAVISH ON IT. (PHOTO) (\$100,000.-up)

EXHIBIT 7

1974 Morris Coin Provenance Misattribution

Walter Breen cataloged the Silver Center Cent appearing in the 1974 G.E.N.A. sale. He attributed its provenance as: "Ex Robert Coulton Davis Coll., lot 1008a (1890), as 'finest known,' later Jenks, Lot 5569 (1921)." However, the coin sold in the 1974 G.E.N.A. sale is actually not the Davis and Jenks coin, but rather the coin from the April 1905 S.H. & H. Chapman sale of the Charles Morris Collection.

Breen's provenance omitted the coin sold in the 1905 Charles Morris sale despite his claim of having done "a search through over 800, possibly nearer to 1,000, catalogs since 1855."

The Davis and Jenks examples are indeed the same coin (which currently resides in the Smithsonian Collection). However, it is distinctly different from the coin sold as lot 1272a in the 1974 G.E.N.A. sale. Note the relative size and, most importantly, position of the silver plug in the images on the next page.

The low position of the plug in the Morris/G.E.N.A. example definitively proves that it is not the same coin as the Davis/Jenks/Smithsonian example.

EXHIBIT 7 — CONTINUED



Smithsonian Example



December 1921, Davis & Harvey (Henry Chapman), Jenks Specimen, Lot 5569



**January 1890, New York Coin & Stamp, Davis Specimen, Lot 1008a
(only obverse plated)**



September 1974, Pine Tree Rare Coin, G.E.N.A. Sale, Lot 1272a

As noted above, the low position of the plug in the Morris/G.E.N.A. example definitively proves that it is not the same coin as the Davis/Jenks/Smithsonian example.

EXHIBIT 8

1974 Morris Coin Provenance Correction

A comparison of the catalog images of the Silver Center Cents sold in 1905 (Morris Collection, which Breen failed to reference in the 1974 G.E.N.A. sale), 2012 (Heritage), and 2017 (Stack's Bowers) shows they are identical to one another. The first known sale of this example occurred in 1905, when S.H. & H. Chapman noted that the plug in the Morris Silver Center Cent was "falsely inserted" *after* striking and was "engraved" rather than struck.



April 1905, S. H. & H. Chapman Catalog, Morris Specimen, Lot 361



September 1974, Pine Tree Rare Coin, G.E.N.A. Sale, Lot 1272a



April 2012, Heritage Auctions, Liberty Collection, Lot 5403



November 2017, Stacks-Bowers, Cardinal Collection, Lot 10003

EXHIBIT 9

Judd-1 Trial Fabrication Theory Refuted

Within the industry, a theory is circulating that the Morris example was a Judd-1 trial piece, fabricated before other Judd-1s were coined. This theory does not prove valid for four reasons:

First, we have the chronology of the coining of Judd-1 and Judd-2 cents outlined in a December 18, 1792, letter from Thomas Jefferson to George Washington that refutes this view:

[Philadelphia] Dec. 18. 92

Th: Jefferson has the honor to send the President 2 Cents made on Voigt's plan, by putting a silver plug worth $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cent into a copper worth $\frac{1}{4}$ of a cent. Mr Rittenhouse is about to make a few by mixing the same plug by fusion with the same quantity of copper. he will then make of copper alone of the same size, and lastly he will make the real cent, as ordered by Congress, four times as big. specimens of these several ways of making the cent will be delivered to the Committee of Congress now having that subject before them.

Source: Smith, Pete, Joel J. Orosz, and Leonard Augsburger. 2017. *1792: Birth of a Nation's Coinage*. p. 136. [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Presidential Series, vol. 11, 16 August 1792 – 15 January 1793, ed. Christine Sternberg Patrick. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002, pp. 530–531.]

This letter from Jefferson to Washington clearly proves that the Silver Center Cents (Judd-1) were produced before the small copper cents (Judd-2).

Second, the copper portion of the Morris example is genuine as struck, but the silver portion is hand-engraved. Thus, the Morris so-called Silver Center Cent must have been fabricated from a genuine Judd-2 coin.

Third, the process of hand-drilling, plugging, and then engraving would have been a completely inefficient use of time and effort. It would have taken between 6.5 and 8.5 hours to accomplish this task, as explained in Addendum 5, #4. It would have been far easier to strike a complete Judd-1 in minutes since the dies and planchets were readily available.

Fourth, the only way for this hand-drilling, plug insertion, and engraving theory of a trial piece to be plausible would be if the Judd-2s had been made before the Judd-1s. But as we have seen above, that wasn't the case. The Jefferson letter proves that the Judd-1s were made first.

In our opinion, the Morris piece had to have been fabricated from a Judd-2 after the production of the Judd-1 pieces and, as such, is not a genuine Silver Center Cent.

SECTION 3

FABRICATED SILVER CENTER INDIAN HEAD CENTS

Introduction

Robert Rodriguez retained the services of Ken Hopple to insert a fabricated silver center plug into 10 Indian Head cents (four trial and six finished specimens). Mr. Hopple is a graduate machining engineer, a tool and die professional, with over 40 years of experience. He is also the former Chief Coiner of the Carson City Mint. To engrave the coin's design, a jewelry engraver, with over 20 years of experience, who considers herself an average to above average artisan, was retained to engrave six silver plugs. This person wishes her identity to remain confidential for security reasons.

EXHIBIT 1

**First Silver Center Indian Head Cent Trial Fabrications
Obverse and Reverse**



This portion of the production process confirmed the method and time required for plug fabrication and insertion. All equipment utilized was similar to that which would have been available at the time of the Morris fabrication.

EXHIBIT 2

Process Stage Comparison
Obverse and Reverse



EXHIBIT 3

Finished Obverse/Reverse vs. Non-Holed Cent



At left is an untouched 1863 Indian Head cent and at right is an altered 1863 Indian Head cent with a fabricated silver plug. This is a far superior result than that seen on the Morris specimen despite being a considerably more complicated coin design than that of a 1792 Silver Center Cent. Note the quality of the engraving and how it compares to an original Indian Head cent.

EXHIBIT 4

Enlarged Finished Fabrication



The enlarged images of the obverse and reverse of the Indian Head cent with a fabricated silver center show the intricate detail obtainable with hand engraving.

EXHIBIT 5

Multiple Fabricated Silver Center Indian Head Cents – Obverse



In order to demonstrate the process of inserting a silver plug into an existing coin, and then engraving that plug, former PCGS-graded examples were used. The purpose of using certified coins was to prove that the above results are modern fabrications.

Multiple Fabricated Silver Center Indian Head Cents – Reverse



As on the previous page, the silver center Indian Head cents shown here are former PCGS MS63 and MS62 examples, demonstrating that they are modern fabrications.

SECTION 4

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

The following facts are presented:

1. The Morris silver center plug is a complete outlier from all other Judd-1s in terms of size and location, as well as from the unique Judd-1a (Section 1: Exhibits 1 and 2, pages 5 and 6).
2. The reverse lettering style on the Morris silver plug is completely different from all genuine examples (Section 1: Exhibit 5, page 9).
3. The Morris silver plug was heavily hand tooled (Section 1: Exhibits 3–6, pages 7 –11).
4. Between 1882 and 1905, auction catalogers highlighted the differences between genuine and altered 1792 Silver Center Cents by emphasizing whether a plug was inserted "before" or "after" the original 1792 striking (Section 2: Exhibits 1-5, pages 13–18; Addendum 2, pages 39–40).
5. The Chapman brothers, in the Morris catalog of April 19 and 20, 1905, were the first to publicly state that the silver center had been falsely inserted (Section 2: Exhibit 4, page 17).
6. Errors and omissions in the cataloging of the Morris example began with Walter Breen's catalog description of this coin for the 1974 G.E.N.A .auction (Section 2: Exhibits 6, 7, and 8, pages 19 –24).
7. Thomas Jefferson wrote to George Washington on December 18, 1792, stating that Silver Center Cents were produced before the small copper cents (Section 2, Exhibit 9, page 25).
8. The process of having Indian Head cents modified by the insertion of the silver plugs, which were then engraved, demonstrates how an American metal smith, prior to 1905, could have created a cent with a fabricated silver center. Most importantly, the process led to an informed estimate of the time that it would have taken to fabricate the Morris example: between 6.5 and 8.5 hours (Section 3: Exhibits 1 through 5, pages 28–33; Addenda 3 & 5, pages 41–47 and 49–50).
9. There was a large profit incentive to fabricate a Silver Center Cent given the cost to acquire a Judd-2 and then handcraft a silver center plug. For example: In the June 1890 New York Coin and Stamp Sale, the Brand/Norweb Judd-2 sold for \$37 while the Bushnell/Parmelee Silver Center Cent sold for \$73.50; the Bushnell/Parmelee example of a Silver Center Cent in the S.H. & H. Chapman sale held May 1906 sold for \$160; and the Silver Center Cent in Elder's October 1907 sale was sold for \$212.50 (Addendum 5: pages 49 and 50).

In light of the above facts, we believe that the Morris is not a genuine 1792 Silver Center Cent. It is our opinion that the copper portion of the cent itself is genuine; however, the silver plug is a forgery that was falsely inserted after the coin was struck from Original dies. The physical evidence, historical references, and Indian Head cent modifications convince us that the Morris Specimen was fabricated by altering a Judd-2 copper cent.

We hope this expanded analysis and additional data will be thoughtfully considered, and that the Morris Specimen will no longer be deemed a genuine Judd-1 Silver Center Cent. In our minds, the certification label also should reflect that the hand-engraved silver plug was falsely inserted after striking.

If third party grading firms are willing to reassess their positions, the American numismatic industry will clearly demonstrate a transparency materially lacking in other collectible categories; this will go far in increasing the confidence in the numismatic field.

ADDENDA

ADDENDUM 1

June 1890, NY Coin & Stamp, Parmelee Auction, Lot 5

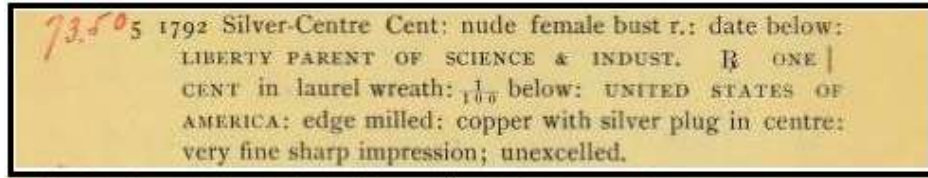
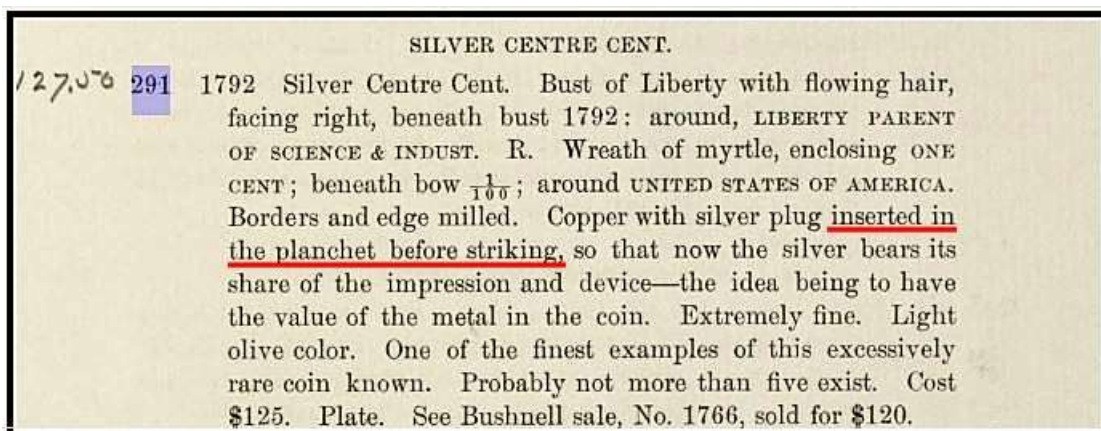


Plate 1, upper left (Actual Size)



ADDENDUM 2

December 1895, S.H. & H. Chapman, Winsor Collection, Lot 291



Following page: Plate II, bottom right (Actual Size)

PLATE II



COLLECTION OF RICHARD B. WINSOR, ESQ.
 CATALOGUED BY S. H. & H. CHAPMAN
 SOLD AT AUCTION BY DAVIS & HARVEY, PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER 16-17, 1895

ADDENDUM 3

KEN HOPPLE FABRICATING A SILVER CENTER INDIAN HEAD CENT



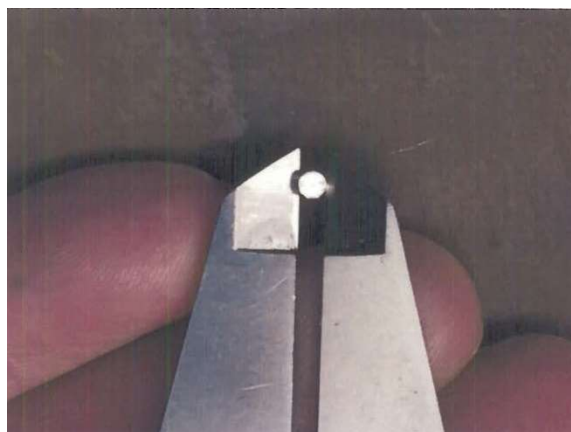
KEN HOPPLE



SILVER PLUG LENGTH



SILVER PLUG WIDTH





COLLET



INDIAN HEAD IN POSITION FOR INITIAL CENTER DRILL – SILVER PLUG DENOTES DRILL POINT I



CENTER DRILL



CENTER DRILL PREPARED TO DRILL



CENTER DRILL VERSUS FINISHING DRILL

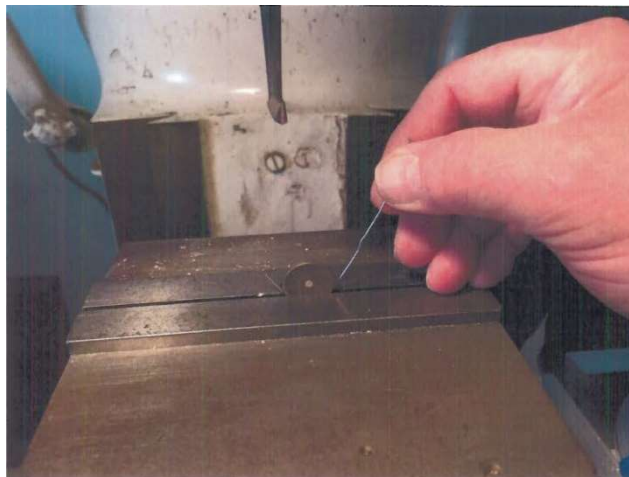


REAMER FINISHES HOLE AFTER BEING DRILLED

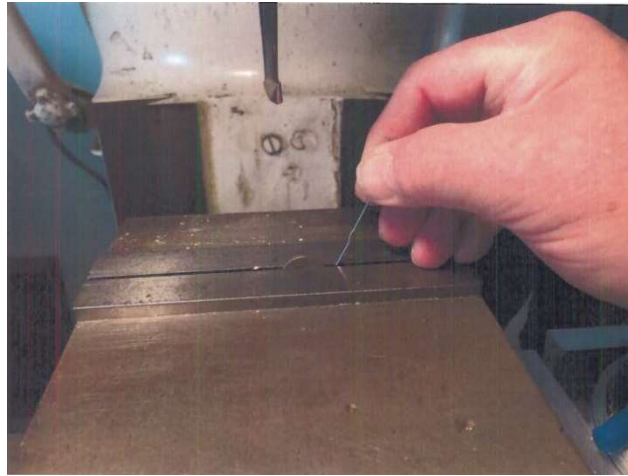
AFTER PLUG INSERTED, PLUG MUST BE SET



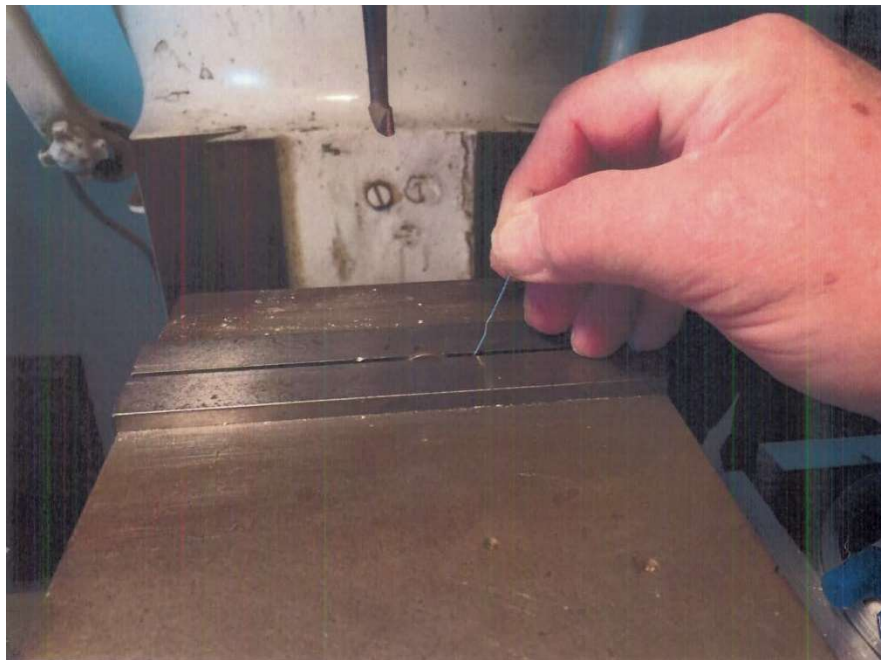
PREPARING TO SET PLUG



LOWERING PLUG INTO VICE TO PRESSURE SET



PREPARING TO SET PLUG



PLUG IN POSITION TO BE SET



FILE AND SHIELD USED TO REMOVE EXCESS SILVER FOR ENGRAVER



PLUG READY FOR ENGRAVING

ADDENDUM 4

1792 JUDD-1 WITHOUT THE SILVER PLUG
QUESTION AND ANSWER



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

Question: Why does the hole appear as it does?

Answer: It is because a centering drill was not used before the finishing drill. As such, the finishing drill "danced" or "wobbled" before it engaged to drill the hole. This explains why the silver plugs have been described as being "conical," since one side is typically larger than the other. Given the results of our fabrication study, a better descriptive term for the plugs would be "mushroom-shaped."

ADDENDUM 5

Analysis of the Economics of Fabricating a Retooled Silver Center Cent

1. AUCTION APPEARANCES OF JUDD-1 AND JUDD-2 IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO ONE ANOTHER

PURPOSE: Establish a relative price comparison between these two pattern varieties

JUDD-1

Bushnell/Brand:

June 1882, S.H. & H. Chapman, Bushnell, Lot 1766:	\$120.00
June 1890, NY Coin & Stamp, Parmelee, Lot 5:	73.50
May 1906, S.H. & H. Chapman, Smith, Lot 1315:	160.00
June 1912, Henry Chapman, Earle, Lot 2179:	330.00

Warner/Winsor/Weinberg:

June 1884, S.H. & H. Chapman, Warner, Lot 3215:	155.00
December 1895, S. H. & H. Chapman, Winsor, Lot 291:	127.50

Judd:

October 1907, T. Elder, Lot 1732:	212.50
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JUDD-2

Garrett:

June 1886, HP Smith, Lot 146:	67.50
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Brand/Norweb:

June 1890, NY Coin & Stamp, Parmelee, Lot 6:	37.00
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REALTIVE PRICE: Judd-2s are valued at approximately one-half that of a Judd-1, as reflected by auction prices between 1882- 1890.

2. LABOR WAGE HISTORY 1870 TO EARLY 1900s

- A. Deflation between 1870 and 1890. Labor wages decline from 16 cents per hour to 13-14 cents per hour, according to the St. Louis Federal Reserve data.
- B. Railroad Engineer, Philadelphia: for the period 1888-1900, the average wage per day was between \$3.27 and \$3.29. Source: "History of Wages in the United States from Colonial Times to 1928," US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- C. Average work week 60-84 hours, according to St. Louis Federal Reserve data.
- D. Consumer Price Inflation 1900 to 1905, averaged .98%, index 84.3 to 88.5, Source: Lebergott, 1984, Library of Economics and Liberty.

3. SKILLED ENGRAVER COMPENSATION

- A. 1877: William Barber compensation \$3,000/year. Assuming a 50-hour work week, two weeks of vacation, his hourly compensation would approximate \$1.20 per hour. Source: usacoinbook.com/encyclopedia/coin-designers/Williams-Barber/.
- B. October 1876: George T. Morgan employed as an assistant US Mint engraver at approximately \$8 per day, Source: coinfactswiki.com.
- C. 1877: Charles E. Barber, employed at the US Mint at \$4 per day, Source: coinfactswiki.com.

ADDENDUM 5 –CONTINUED

4. INDIAN HEAD CENT SILVER CENTER FABRICATION TIME AND COST STUDIES

- A. Fabricating silver center Indian Head Cents averaged 13 hours, including preparation time for center hole drilling and crafting a silver plug for insertion.
- B. Engraver estimated that the time required to engrave the Morris specimen would be between 6 and 8 hours. Ken Hopple was able to drill a hole and fabricate a silver plug in 30 to 45 minutes.
- C. Total estimated time to fabricate the Morris Silver Center Cent would be between 6.5 and 8.5 hours.

5. ESTIMATED COST TO FABRICATE MORRIS SILVER CENTER PLUG

- A. Assuming 7.5 hours, the mid-point of the estimated time range and using the estimated average hourly wage rate of William Barber of \$1.20 per hour, total cost would equal \$9 or more than the \$4 and \$8 a Charles E. Barber or George T. Morgan would earn in a day.
- B. Given that railroad engineers were compensated, on average, \$3.28 per day, we believe a more realistic and conservative cost range would be between \$2 and \$5.

CONCLUSION

We estimate that a reasonable price range for a Judd-1, in 1905, would have been between \$125 and \$200, based upon values prior to, and after this date. Given the price discount of a Judd-2, as reflected in auction appearances close to those of a Judd-1, we believe a Judd-2 could have been acquired for approximately one-half the cost of a Judd-1. Assuming a fabrication cost between \$2 and \$5, and even assuming the \$9 high cost estimate, there would have been sufficient profit incentive to attempt the Morris fabrication project, potentially between 50% and 100%. Unfortunately for the fabricator, the Chapmans were very knowledgeable about Silver Center Cents, given that their auction catalogs described a silver plug as being inserted before or after coining for many years prior to the Morris auction. Therefore, this fabrication was caught and thus, the Morris specimen auctioned for only \$16—a considerable loss for the fabricator.